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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4631
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SUBJECT: DRC ELECTIONS: KABILA, BEMBA MOVE TO SECOND ROUND
RUNOFF

REF: KINSHASA 1307

11. (U) The Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) announced the evening of August 20 official provisional results from the DRC's July 30 presidential election. According to CEI figures, incumbent President Joseph Kabila won 44.81 percent of the votes cast to Vice President Jean-Pierre Bemba's 20.03 percent. As no candidate won a majority of votes in the first round, according to the country's electoral law Kabila and Bemba -- the top two vote recipients -- will face off in a second round of balloting scheduled for October 25.

12. (U) The CEI reported that of the 25,420,199 registered voters, 17,931,238 went to the polls -- a voter participation rate of 70.54 percent. (Note: The DRC's constitutional referendum in December 2005 had a voter turnout of 62 percent. End note.) Of the 17.9 million ballots cast, 993,704 (approximately five percent) were declared null or blank for having been marked improperly or not marked at all. Consequently, the number of valid ballots cast in the July 30 presidential election was 16,937,534.

13. (U) According to the CEI, Kabila won 7,590,485 votes to Bemba's 3,392,592 votes. Antoine Gizenga came in third place with 13.06 percent (2,211,280 votes), Nzanga Mobutu was in fourth with 4.77 percent (808,397) and Oscar Kashala was fifth with 3.46 percent (585,410). The remaining votes were spread among the other 28 presidential candidates, with only three of the 28 garnering more than one percent of the total vote.

14. (U) Bemba won Kinshasa overall with 49 percent of the vote, although Gizenga did narrowly win one of the capital's four electoral districts. Gizenga was second overall in Kinshasa with 22 percent of the vote, and Kabila was third with slightly less than 15 percent. Nationwide, Kabila's vote was largely based in the eastern half of the DRC, where he won the provinces of Katanga, Maniema, North and South Kivu, and Orientale. Kabila also won the central province of Eastern Kasai with 36 percent of the vote. Bemba's votes were focused mostly in western DRC, where he won the provinces of Bas-Congo and Equateur (in addition to Kinshasa); Bemba also won Western Kasai province with 32 percent of the vote. Gizenga handily won his native province of Bandundu with 80 percent of the vote there.

15. (SBU) The announcement of the provisional results was marred by gunfire and isolated acts of violence in the downtown area of Kinshasa (septel). Shots were heard around the CEI's headquarters and elsewhere in Gombe in the hours starting well before and culminating after the Commission's announcement, although the area was heavily guarded by

Congolese police and MONUC peacekeepers. Because of the violence, the televised broadcast of the results was delayed from its original time of 8pm until after 11pm local time. Due to security concerns, CEI President Abbe Apollinaire Malu did not remain to speak with journalists at the CEI's press center in downtown Kinshasa next to CEI headquarters (and also next to the Chancery).
MEECE